

AMENDMENT

In the Drawing:

Please replace the drawing sheets 1, depicting Figs. 1-3 and 10;

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

23. (Once amended) A tampon for feminine hygiene, comprising a generally cylindrical absorbent portion having a generally cylindrical compressed, solid fibre core from which longitudinal ribs extend radially outward, wherein each of the ribs has a proximal end attached to the fibre core, each of the ribs is compressed less than the fiber core, thereby having a coarser capillary structure than the fibre core, [and] each of the ribs is separated from adjacent ribs at the proximal end by [longitudinal grooves] an amount greater than such rib is separated from an adjacent longitudinal rib proximate the distal end, and the tampon is free of restrictions to substantial radial expansion.

24. (Amended) The tampon of Claim 23, wherein [tape-shaped nonwoven material is] the absorbent portion comprises a needled nonwoven material.

Please add the following new claims:

-- 27. The tampon of Claim 23 wherein the coarse capillary structure of the ribs is substantially uniform.

28. The tampon of Claim 23 wherein the tampon is capable of substantially uniform radial expansion along the longitudinal direction. --

Please cancel Claims 1-5, 20, and 21 without prejudice.